National Water Resources Council held in September, 1987 under the Chairmanship of Prime Minister;

The existing National Water Policy needed to be reviewed and updated in the context of a number of issues/emerging challenges and also in the light of the experiences of the last 10 years of its implementation. Accordingly an updated draft National Water Policy was formulated and finalized after detailed discussions in the 10th meeting of National Water Board in October, 1998.

The draft National Water Policy and Draft National Policy Guidelines for Water Allocaiton amongst the States, as finalized by the National Water Board, were placed before the National Water Resources Council (NWRC) for consideration and adoption in its 4th meeting held on 7.7.2000.

During the meeting, the deliberations established a broad consensus among the States on most the issues constained in the proposed policy. However, some areas of differences still remain. In order to achieve greater convergence and agreement on these issues the council decided for constitution of a Working Group of Ministers of all the States/UTs chaired by Hon'ble Minister of Water Resources.

Conservation of Surface Water

1078. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have proposed a scheme for the conservation of surface water;

(b) whether the State Governments are being assisted by Government for the purpose; and

(c) if so, the details of the proposal in that regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) Government of India has recognized the need for conservation and management of water resources. The utilisable surface water by conventional methods has been assessed as 690 BCM. To harness available water resources and augment water supplies, about 3600 large dams and reservoirs and 250 barrages have been constructed. A total live storage capacity of about 177 BCM has been provided by 1995. An additional live storage capacity of about 75 BCM will be created on completion of the dams, which are under various stages of construction. Proposals to take up additional dams to create a live storage of about 132 BCM are also under formulation/consideration. The replenishable groundwater resources are of the order of 432 BCM out of which about 154 BCM has been developed for use.

(b) and (c) Water being a State subject, all Water Resources Development Projects are planned and constructed by the State Government according to their priority with their own resources. Government of India under "Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (ABP)" is providing Central Loan Assistance to State Governments for expeditious completion of ongoing multipurpose projects and completion of other medium and minor projects which are in the advanced stage of construction. Besides, the Government of India is also promoting Rainwater harvesting through Watershed Management Programme, Artificial Recharge of Ground Water and Rood-top Rainwater Harvesting under the sector reform project of Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme under the Ministry of Rural Development for which technical and financial assistance is provided to the State Government and other implementing agencies.